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NPA students travel to Tibet

By Autumn Wright
Staff Writer

Delivering medical supplies to the elderly, and experiencing the rich culture of China were the main goals for the 12 NPA students who traveled to China during the summer of 2017.

“I’m quite happy with it, I’m very proud of the students, I’m very grateful for all the people in the community who helped out,” said Arnold King. King is an NPA teacher and was the trip leader along with two chaperones: Thérèse Burns and Jacqui Langeland.

King first traveled to Tibet in 2010. He lived there for four months to teach English and develop curriculum at a vocational training center in the small village of Yushu. Unfortunately, during King’s time in Yushu, there was a devastating earthquake that registered at 6.9 on the Moment Magnitude scale. “It was super traumatic, so [King] made a point of going back there and trying to help that community,” said Iya Ortiz-Beck, a junior who went on the trip. She was accompanied by fellow juniors Lana Sharkey, and Clary Greacen, and current seniors Ruth Magee, Amelia Parker, Celeste Kastel Riggan, Ryan Meshulam, Emilia von Einem Diggins. Kai Cooper, Georgia King, Tessa Paulson-Palmer, and India Allen are all graduated seniors who also traveled with the group. The students fundraised for this trip by hosting a Tibet Night and Movie Night that focused on Tibetan culture and food.

The group of 12 students delivered medical supplies and terrain appropriate wheelchairs to a senior care center in Yushu. The wheelchairs were from a firm in Berkeley that produces rough terrain wheelchairs for people in developing countries. Whirlwind Wheelchair International is a non-profit dedicated to improving the lives of people with disabilities in the developing world. “The money for the wheelchairs was generously provided by the Lost Coast Rotary,” King said. While in Xining, they purchased comodes and an arthritis lamp for Tibetan people living in the elderly care home. They loaded the medical supplies onto a bus for their long travel to Yushu.

Another one of King’s goals for the trip was to give the students a well rounded impression and experience of China. “I wanted to follow some themes that I chose but we also followed some of the themes of the student’s observation projects that they created during our China study class,” King said. The students took a class during elective periods to prepare for the trip. They took time to look at the geography and the culture of China. “These students planned for this trip for a year and a half; they were dedicated,” King recounted.



PHOTO BY AMELIA PARKER
Traditional Tibetan prayer flags were seen by NPA students at the Princess Wencheng Temple (above) and throughout the entire region. The students were able to experience many different aspects of Chinese culture as they traveled all across the country, from bustling cities to rural Tibetan villages.

See TIBET page 2

Behind the curtain

OSF actors share their stories

By Mattea Denney
Staff Writer

For actors at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF), theater in education has led them to a career.

“When I was in high school, I started doing a one act play contest,” OSF actress Kimberly Scott explained. “We performed a show called The Shadow Box, which is about death and dying. I was in it with my friend, and her dad, who was this big, burly, cowboy type, came to see our performance. And then, at the end of the show, during the curtain call, I look over, and this guy has tears going down his face.” Scott attributes that moment as when she realized the power behind this art form. “I thought if this art form can make it possible for me to have a conversation with that man, that has power.” Later in Scott’s life, during her first year of college studying pre-law, she knew that theater was something she had to pursue. “I had this Sunday, and I was in the library writing my briefs for the next day’s debate tournament, and I just could not concentrate,” Scott reflected. “I was trying to decide if I should audition for a Cole Porter review. This big lightbulb went on: If this is distracting you now, this is going to distract you for the rest of your life. Pack it up, go home, change your major, get on with it.” Scott went on to study acting at the Yale School of Drama, and has worked hard to have a successful career.

Similarly, OSF actress Alejandra Escalante found her inspiration for pursuing a career in theater through her education. “I got involved in theater pretty early on, around twelve ... and my dad was very hesitant about what you could do in the realm of theater, and understandably so,” Escalante said. “Then, I had a really great theater program in high school, and they just helped me to feel really confident in what I wanted.” Escalante then went on to study theater at Boston University.

Another OSF actor, Daniel José Molina, who stars as Prince Hal in Shakespeare’s King Henry IV Parts I and II, found his passion for theater through his education as well. The Samantha College of Art and Design (SCAD) graduate always knew he would do something artistic. “After my experience in theater before college, I knew I would do something at an arts school, and my mom knew that, and she supported me, knowing that I was weird enough to not just go to a state school,” Molina joked. “I found [SCAD] and I had an incredibly supportive faculty there who were very generous with their own contacts.” As a result, Molina had many directors asking him to submit auditions for their shows by the time he was a college senior. “That’s how it started. And since I can’t sing and I can’t dance, Shakespeare was pretty much the only thing I was going for.” Molina has since worked at Shakespeare festivals in Utah, New Jersey, and Georgia in addition to the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

For the actors at OSF, performing for students is one of the most gratifying parts of the job. The festival’s productions often challenge the traditional Shakespeare canon, and the actors believe that it offers a new insight for students in particular. “Even since I started here, in 2011, I think the breadth of the work we put up has grown, especially the kind of chances and risks we’ve taken,” Escalante explained. “My hope is that it reaches a wider audience, especially the students, that might think Shakespeare means pumpkin pants and that’s all it can be. Which it can be, but if we’re only doing that style of Shakespeare, then we’re not challenging ourselves.” Molina, playing a young character in this season’s modern interpretation of Shakespeare’s Henry plays, also appreciates OSF’s unique take on Shakespeare, as he thinks it helps younger audience members connect with the story. “I think the kids identify with Hal a lot more, whether or not they’re comfortable with the language or comfortable with understanding every single image that is thrown at them,” Molina said. “[Hal] wants so badly to be like every other kid, and that’s something that is really fun to be able to play for high school audiences.”

See OSF Page 2



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL
Alejandra Escalante (left) and Daniel José Molina (center) performed in both Henry IV Part I and Henry IV part II. They both attribute their experiences in educational theater as the catalyst for their theatrical career.

Señor Gyenis Broadens Students’ Bilingual Horizons

By Ruth Magee
Staff Writer

Soccer jerseys and world maps are strewn all over the walls of NPA’s Spanish room. The school’s new Spanish teacher, Justin Gyenis, is an avid soccer player, and traveler. He has spent years living abroad in Spain, and even spent a semester of college studying in Chile. He is excited to share his experiences of living abroad and his love of Spanish with NPA’s student body.

While Gyenis was studying Spanish at Humboldt State University (HSU), he spent two semesters learning abroad in Spain and Chile. It was on his trip to Spain that he met his wife, Ana Maria. Later in his education, Gyenis traveled to Chile for another semester abroad, and his wife (then girlfriend) visited him there. “She came to visit me when I studied abroad in Chile, and then she came back here [to Arcata] for a semester while I finished school,” he said. After Gyenis graduated from HSU, he and his wife went back to Spain so she could finish her schooling there.

After graduating from HSU in 2007 with a degree in Spanish, Gyenis and his wife left Humboldt County for Spain. While living in Spain, he worked as an English tutor, which inspired his current love for teaching. “I would go to people’s houses and I would teach little kids, teenagers, and adults for all different reasons, and they were all at different levels,” he reminisced.

Soon, Gyenis decided that he was passionate about teaching, and returned to HSU to get his teaching credential. Gyenis explained that, “doing tutoring was a pretty good gig for [Spain], but I felt like in order to make a career I needed to

move away from the tutoring and get really serious about it by getting a teaching credential.”

For his student teaching requirement, Gyenis taught at Eureka High School under the guidance of an old friend. “I taught at Eureka High, where I went to high school, and I worked with my friend, who used to be my teacher and my soccer coach,” he recalled. Gyenis was really glad he got to work with his old Spanish teacher because, “he makes the lesson plans fun and I definitely learned a lot from him.”

When Gyenis received his teaching credential in 2010, he immediately got a job teaching Spanish at South Fork High School in Miranda, California. “I was really lucky to find a job right away at South Fork. I spent a lot of my childhood in South Fork because my grandparents lived very close to there, so it was kind of a nostalgic time teaching down there,” he recollected. Gyenis has fond memories from his four years

of teaching in Miranda, especially of the weather. “They have a real summer, so when you’re barbecuing it’s not freezing. And in the evening the fog doesn’t roll in,” he commented.

Some of the teachers at South Fork High School commute from out of town to Miranda everyday, but Gyenis and his wife decided to move there instead. He wanted to move to Miranda because, “most of the teachers there go back and forth, and I felt like that was a lot of driving, but also it’s a different community. It felt weird for me to be leaving that community and for me to not be where the school is. It just felt like I would be detached from what’s going on.”

See GYENIS page 6

SPORTS NPA girls tennis

Although the seniors are leaving, NPA tennis coach Michael Bazemore says there is a bright future ahead for the team.

See Page 3



ART San Francisco art trip

NPA art students take a trip to San Francisco, to look at and get inspiration from different forms of art.

See Page 7



EVENTS Roshni center for women

A group of NPA students participate in the annual Roshni center for women event which helps girls and women in rural Pakistan

See Page 4.



The Word

How have the weekly all-school meetings affected you ?



Lily Ayres

“You get to address topics in your community, and we’re with the whole school, so it’s time to get to know people.”



Jane McCaffrey

“I get to know more people in the school that I don’t normally hang out with, and I get to think about some issues that are present in the world, and the important things.”



Jackson Rankin

“They are very good. It brings all the classes together, and makes it sort of like a unified community. It makes me feel more secure.”



Jason Roberts

“It provides a sense of community, and gives us this shared feeling of togetherness. It also brings together new ideas and brings us together as a community.”



Isus Otis

“They’re interesting because you get to see everyone’s individual perspectives on issues when we’re doing the group demonstrations. I actually prefer it when we get to use the time for choir because it gives us more time to be together doing one thing as a school.”

TIBET

from page 1

The group traveled to a multitude of cities such as Shanghai and Beijing. They also went to many historical sites, such as the Great Wall of China, and the Terracotta Warriors in Shaanxi, China. The students did not stay with host families while they were there, and instead stayed all together in youth hostels. The result was a bonded group of young travelers. “I think I got a lot closer to people that I wouldn’t have known very well if I didn’t travel with them and spend that much time with them,” Ortiz-Beck recounted. Because they went to so many places, they were extremely active and they walked at least five miles every day.

Having previously been to China and Tibet, King found it reasonably easy to teach the students about what they could expect. “There was an advantage in the beginning because we were going to cities that I had been to before, so that familiarity helped us do a lot more. But when we got to new cities it took us a little longer to locate our hostels,” King recounted.

King sees the process of truly discovering China to be a unique experience in this foreign country. “We saw a lot every day, we didn’t just bus from landmark to landmark. We discovered the streets, alleyways, backyards, and everyday life of China,” King said.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CLARY GREACEN
NPA students assemble all-terrain wheelchairs for residents of a senior care facility in the Tibetan city of Yushu.

went to all different kinds of places and saw all different kinds of people. I hope those 12 kids keep traveling even if they don’t make it back to China,” King conveyed.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CLARY GREACEN
The view from a monastery in Yushu, Tibet. The students visited Yushu over the summer of 2017.

The trip was meticulously planned, yet there was still room for adjustments when needed. “I planned all the routes out for the most part ahead of time, even down to having Google Maps laid out months in advance,” King expressed. Although the trip consisted of mostly walking and taking buses and trains, the group also traveled on boat down the Yangtze River.

As much as the students enjoyed their time in China, they especially loved Tibet. “I was proud of the way the students interacted with the kids their age there,” King reminisced. The group played sports late into the evening with local kids. They shared, “smiles, and hugs and laughter with the elderly women at the care center,” and the other locals living in Yushu.

King said that he hoped that one day the students would “return to China and be enriched by that experience.” He continued saying he hoped they would be able to, “show what they have learned with others and to be able to appreciate China and its people as a real place on earth and not this entity that the media can sometimes make it out to be.” As the students learned on the trip, China is a vastly diverse country. “We

OSF

from page 1

Scott, in addition to appreciating the opportunity to perform for students, is passionate about the role theater and the arts play in schools. “Any time there was a presentation of any art in my school, it made me realize how much wider the world is. When you grow up in a small town, it’s even more important,” Scott affirmed. “It gives kids the ability to spur a conversation with anyone about any part of life. It is so important that theater arts and the arts in general are a regular part of students’ lives, not only so it’s not taken for granted, but to teach them to be able to communicate with, to see, to feel what others do. We are in a global climate where it’s hard for us to talk to each other and respect each other. I think the arts are the doorway to remembering that we are more the same than we are different.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL
Kimberly Scott (left) and Alejandra Escalante (center) performed many roles in Henry IV part II. In this scene, Scott is playing Pistol, and Escalante is playing Doll Tearsheet.

IB middle years

Middle schoolers to be incorporated into the IB programme

By Omar Gadzhiev
Staff Writer

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme is exceptionally rigorous. The IB Diploma is not just a paper with numbers on it, it is a representation of the student’s exceptional hard work and dedication. It is an outcome of sleepless nights, heated debates, despair, depression, fears, and victories; obtaining an IB diploma is learning a new way of life. IB does not merely grade students, it builds them.

NPA’s administration understands that and made an executive decision to introduce a Middle Years IB Program (MYP). Being part of the IB continuum, MYP stretches from 6th to 10th grade and prepares students for the diploma program in 11th and 12th grade, creating an entirely new structure for NPA. The decision to start the middle school was out of the desire to extend the IB Programme to motivate middle schoolers who wanted a scholastic challenge before high school. From the very beginning of the middle school, teachers were aware of the upcoming official authorization. Michael Bazemore, NPA’s principal commented, “We started the middle school with the knowledge that we were going to have a program where we were moving towards a Middle Years Programme; we already designed the courses to be very similar to what they would be after official authorization.”

Bazemore does not have any concerns for either freshman and sophomores or any middle schoolers. He stated that so far freshmen succeeded in tackling all the goals presented to them saying that freshmen, “have allayed my concerns, because I am seeing how well they are doing.” This year, the freshmen dismissed any concern regarding their abilities to reach objectives presented to them, which showed their readiness for the high school IB Programme.

Adam Hess, a math teacher at both the NPA middle school and high school, is excited about the introduction of the Middle Years IB Programme, and hopes that it will provide the structure necessary for doing successful work and obtaining higher scores during senior year. “We are working on the integration of the math curriculum from those younger years until those higher grades when you transition to the diploma program so we are really trying to make it a nice consistent path for students that allows them to feel that they are making progress each year,” Hess

commented.

The MYP is making the IB program more consistent with fewer transitions and confusions; it provides a clearer path for both students and teachers. “The MYP is an important step in supporting students because it will provide a well articulated structure for developing skills that are needed,” Bazemore explained. He continued, saying, “In the past, sometimes, we have struggled to support all the students in getting those skills. I think the Middle Years Programme structure will be a big step towards increasing the number of students who have everything they need to excel in the diploma programme.”

It is evident that overall expectations for the students’ results senior year will rise. However, Bazemore adds that that is not the primary goal. “For us, the process is always more important than the outcome, so we are not necessarily trying to achieve a certain goal with our IB marks. But, ultimately our hope would be that more students will receive diplomas. Diploma scores will be higher, but that should be a result of a successful process and not a goal in itself.”

It is crystal clear that NPA students and especially teachers are prepared for this change. Bazemore is pleased with the teachers, saying that, “I feel like our staff has been getting stronger and stronger, and this year it is the best faculty that we have ever had.” He adds that he is very pleased with efforts on the part of the faculty to grow their programs and initiate new processes to increase support for the students. “I see lots of initiative being taken by the faculty, and that’s what I hope for all the time. That is what you want from somebody, for them to have ownership of your program and to build it and take it forward.”

Still, this change is not going to be easy; it will be a long process, which will require a lot of effort from all sides. NPA, however, does not dread the future but greets it with courage. NPA has experienced many changes over the years, and does not plan to stop revolutionizing the school. Bazemore hopes for, “A time when the overall structure of NPA’s academic programs and major events of the school year are well established, and that continued growth would be the enhancement of existing programs rather than major changes to the ones that are there.”

The graduated class of ‘17

By Ruth Magee
Staff Writer

Radio broadcasting, Japanese drumming, rowing crew, dancing, and volunteer work are just a few examples of what NPA’s graduating class of 2017 is doing during their first year of college. This class is attending schools all over the United States, and some students have even traveled to Europe for a gap year. NPA strives to prepare their students for success in college, and so far the class of 2017 is doing fantastic.

The International Baccalaureate programme is rigorous and the workload is quite sizeable, but NPA’s graduated students in college find that it really prepared them for higher level academics. Both Isaac Murphy and Tessa Paulson-Palmer cited NPA’s strong English program as one of their tools for success. “I learned how to write essays really well which has been nice,” Murphy stated. However, India Allen, who is attending the University of Pennsylvania, was not prepared for just how competitive an Ivy League school can be. “I love NPA’s approach to education. I wish that Penn would focus more on learning rather than grades and competing,” Allen elaborated.

When the class of 2017 has free time, they are involved in a multitude of extracurricular activities. Allen is extremely involved in her new community. She is currently working at the university call center where she calls alumni to ask for donations. She is also, “helping to organize the 2018

IvyG Conference, which is a conference for First-Generation and Low-Income (FGLI) students at top-tier universities to meet FGLI alumni from other top-tier universities.” Allen is also going to be starting work in a research lab at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia soon, and she is planning on getting involved with the Penn Environmental Group and the outdoors club in the immediate future.

Paulson-Palmer, who is attending the University of Puget Sound, is involved in a club where she learns the ancient art of Japanese Taiko drumming. She is also involved in a club that educates the public about reproductive health services that are available on her school’s campus. Additionally, Paulson-Palmer enjoys volunteer tutoring at a nearby middle school.

Amelia David, the previous co-editor of the Heron Herald, goes to Bard College in New York. One of the reasons she enjoys her school is because, “Bard is a very small liberal arts school and the principles that it believes in are based off of respect, just like NPA.” Outside of challenging classes, David is part of a club called the Underground Collective for Interwoven Roots, which is an herbalism club that focuses on spiritualism and nature. When asked to describe her club, David said, “We forage for herbs on nature hikes and in the meetings we make salves and other medicinal remedies to sell at apothecaries.” David is also excited to start broadcasting a radio show for the school’s radio program very soon.

Murphy chose Cornell University in New York because

of its outstanding crew program. He was involved in crew for the entirety of his high school career, and is planning on continuing in college. Murphy said that he, “wanted to row in college and this was the best place for me to do that.” Aside from crew, Murphy is excited to be surrounded by a diverse group of peers, and he has enjoyed getting to choose his courses from Cornell’s wide selection.

Tannyce Bunch has decided to take advantage of California’s new law regarding community college tuition, and is attending the City College of San Francisco for free. Bunch has always loved the city of San Francisco and is enjoying her small class sizes and the readily available free tutoring her school has to offer. She is being kept very busy this year trying to manage all of her school work, her job as a waitress, and her social life.

Overall, NPA’s class of 2017 is busy balancing school work, jobs, volunteer work, extracurricular activities, and social lives. For many of the students, the adjustment to living in shared dorms on campus has been one of the more difficult aspects of their transition to college. But, they are now well situated and enjoying their time as college freshmen. College offers so many new opportunities that sometimes makes it hard to choose what to spend your free time doing. As Allen said, “Unfortunately, there are only 24 hours in a day.”

Thailand enriches NPA students

By Omega Gaskill
Staff Writer

While it may have been incredibly chaotic, there was always an atmosphere of friendship on this past summer’s trip to Thailand. A group of six students and two chaperones spent nearly three weeks travelling through Thailand and Cambodia as a part of NPA’s annual Thailand trip.

The main focus of the trip is for both the students and the chaperones to become immersed in Thai culture and go teach English to Thai students. By living with host families and teaching English at Prasatwittayakarn School (PWK), students return as more thoughtful and globally minded citizens. Cairo Aguilar, Evan Aguilar, Erica Davis, Maximus Landon, Cypress Killeen, Kayitesi Mussmann, Taria Ross, and chaperones Mary Ann Lyons-Tinsley, and Keenan Hilton embarked on their journey in order to experience something drastically different from their typical daily surroundings. “It was my first international trip, and I’m so glad I went on this one in particular just because I had such a good experience teaching the students, and now I want to go back to Southeast Asia,” Davis said excitedly. PWK is a “feeder school,” meaning that its students come from many surrounding schools and has a student body of around three thousand. “When I got there, the part that I really didn’t want to do, which was teaching, was the best part of the trip in my opinion,” Evan Aguilar commented. For several days, at the beginning of the trip, the students from NPA split into groups of two or three to teach English to the Thai students. The classes varied in size from 30 to 200, and the students’ comprehension levels were also quite varied. Many of the Thai students were surprisingly fluent in English, and some had even surpassed the skills of their Thai teachers.

A definite highlight for many students from NPA was the incredible bonding they experienced with the families who hosted them. “Mac [Aguilar’s host brother] and I, even though we were only with each other for about a week, got really close,” Aguilar said, when asked about his host family. Thai students who had room in their home for another

person hosted an NPA student for around a week and a half. In the case of Killeen, the family he was arranged to stay with had already reached its capacity with thirteen children under the same roof. “I lived with my host sister Bon Bam. It was really awesome because we got really close, and had really good conversations because she spoke English very well,” Davis said.

While nearly all experiences were good, some were shocking, like when the students discovered bugs living in their homes. “The first night, I woke up and there was a bug the size of a tennis ball on my chest. After that, before I went to sleep, I would always shake out my bedding so I didn’t sleep with any bugs,” Evan Aguilar admitted. The NPA students made many treasured memories while on the trip, and happily reminisce about them. Davis recounted a time when she and her host sister, Bon Bam searched for water buffalo after she had noticed how Davis liked them. “We rode around in the jungle until we finally found this herd of water buffalo and they all ran down into this lake and were just swimming in the lake with only their noses and heads above the water. We were only a few feet away from them and it was amazing,” Davis said, smiling as she told the story.

After having their lives so incredibly touched and enriched by those they met on their travels, the students are inspired to continue traveling in the future.



PHOTO BY KEENAN HILTON
Traditional Buddhist lotus statues were among the significant Buddhist symbols NPA students encountered in Thailand.

Leaving, but still learning

NPA’s girls tennis team looks forward to a bright future

By Caleb Weiss
Staff Writer

At McKinleyville High School, in the light mist and the cold, the girls tennis singles tournament took place. The tournament is called Humboldt Del Norte Singles, or HDNS. This year’s two captains of the NPA girls tennis team, Ruth Magee and Celeste Kastel Riggan, reflected upon how this season was a year of ups and downs. However they both felt that overall the team was able to become close knit and learned how to work well with each other by the end of the season.

Both girls communicated that they loved being co-captains because they believed that they were finally in a position to encourage the other players and keep them motivated. Magee and Kastel Riggan were able to help train the team alongside varsity coach Michael Bazemore. The captains believe that the newly recruited athletes on the team will be capable of winning many more matches in future years.

For Kastel Riggan, “tennis is really a mental game. That’s our biggest challenge to not let our emotions get in the way of our tennis.” She reflected that when playing tennis the biggest advantage you could give to your opponent is letting them think they can win. When playing a match, if you get mad or your opponent sees you in an emotional space, they feel as though they have the advantage over you; and often they do.

Bazemore, NPA Head of School and the tennis coach for both the boys and girls teams,

has created a place where intellectual pursuits are encouraged in athletics. He strives for a high level of good sportsmanship and believes in the value of setting goals. For the girls team most of the players are fairly new to tennis, so this year was a time that Bazemore was able to teach them and hopefully mold them into a great tennis team for future years. According to Bazemore, “There was a standout player from every match which I liked because it was somebody new each time.” From the first to the last game the team’s confidence grew tremendously according to Magee. Both captains feel that it was very special to see the team grow and they believe they have come a long way since the beginning of the season but that they still have a lot more growing to do in the next couple months before the end of the year.

Kastel Riggan and Magee both love the game of tennis and plan on playing it for the rest of their lives. Kastel Riggan is taking a gap year next year and plans to play a lot of tennis at the clay courts near her family’s home in Colombia where she will be staying. She will be practicing and getting better and hopefully be able to play for her college team. Kastel Riggan believes that even if you are not in the top six, it is still very important to be on the team and to push yourself and you will grow and eventually make your way there.

As for Magee, she plans on playing intramural tennis while at college and still hopes to play regularly. Both girls are graduating this year, but this is not the end of them learning the game of tennis, it is merely the beginning of their journey in their education in the world of tennis. Overall the team had a great season and the younger team members are looking forward to what they will do next year.



PHOTO BY AIDA KASTEL
Tennis captains Ruth Magee (left) and Celeste Kastel-Riggan (right) posed for a photo after the HDN doubles championship.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CELESTE KASTEL-RIGGAN
Senior tennis team member Leila Moss was one of the players at this year’s HDN doubles tournament.



The LGBTQ+ community rallies together

By Amelia Parker
Staff Writer

A parade led by the Marching Lumberjacks covered the streets of Arcata in a swath of colors to support Redwood Pride on Saturday, September 24th.

Held on the Arcata Plaza, Redwood Pride is an event that represents Humboldt County's community of acceptance. This year, personal stories and general messages about peace and love were shared as the open mic became the center for ideas and support to be expressed directly to the audience. As the website of Redwood Pride states, "Redwood Pride is built on the foundations of inclusivity, hope, and acceptance for everyone."



PHOTO COURTESY OF CAELUM ZWIKER
Many flags were displayed at the Redwood Pride event to represent the various cultures and identifications of the people present.

Caelum Zwiker, a junior from NPA, helped with the organization, promotion, and photography for Redwood Pride. Zwiker, an individual who is highly involved in his community, reflected that Pride is a defining representation of Arcata. "In a sense, it really felt like a revitalization of the Humboldt/Arcata LGBTQ+ community – that isn't to say that it was suffering, though," Zwiker commented. "Really, what I'm trying to point out is that I've never been in such a publicly open, accepting, and overall tight-knit event before. I felt as though I, and everyone else, created a connection with everyone that attended the event, whether they were close friends, acquaintances, or people who I had never met before that day." Zwiker recognized the meaning-

fulness of this event as not only a celebration and recognition of LGBTQ+ individuals, but as a reminder of the universal acceptance present in our community.

Cypress Killeen, another student from NPA's junior class attended the Pride rally. Killeen reflected on the positive qualities Humboldt was showing of itself through Pride. "I found that Redwood Pride really highlighted the key qualities of our community, one of them being the ability for a driven few to accomplish more than a divided few and the other was the amount of appreciation and acceptance in our community as a whole."

As the LGBTQ+ community transitions through a time of uncertainty, the increase in support nationwide is uplifting and hopeful for individuals involved. Though Redwood Pride has taken place in past years, the exceptional support apparent in this year's event is encouraging to not only those directly identifying as LGBTQ+, but also to the larger Humboldt community. Zwiker believes that, "the shared experiences and drive we all share help us to look to the future and bring our hearts together to beat as one triumphant drum leading onward."



PHOTO COURTESY OF CAELUM ZWIKER
Juniors Sophia Escudero (left) and Cypress Killeen (right) hold the Redwood Pride banner in the parade through the plaza.

Happy haunting at the annual Halloween house

By Abram Rau
Staff Writer

Creative freedom, sugar, and a day to interact with NPA's entire high school; this is Halloween. Halloween at NPA is special because the whole school goes to school administrator Jean Bazemore's house in Trinidad to set up and organize the annual Halloween house. This year's 20th annual Halloween House was unique because this year, a large portion of the freshmen who contributed to the production of the Halloween house are NPA Middle School Alumni.

NPA's seniors were in charge of planning the rooms and leading the planning for the event during all school meetings. The actual creation of the Halloween house began Halloween morning, with the entire high school driving to Trinidad to prepare the house with various decorations and activities. The high school was preparing for about 130 student visitors from the NPA middle school and Trinidad elementary school. When all of the high school arrived at Bazemore's house, they split into their groups and began to decorate their rooms.

The job of setting up for the Halloween house is no easy task. The "scary room" is a room on the second floor of the house where junior Carson Campbell was setting up a haunted carnival. The room was pitch black and had no open windows. Putting on the room was a daunting task, but everyone working in the room was passionate about working there. Freshman Savannah Tarlton said that the "look on her sister's face when she scared her was worth staying in the hot room." The rest of the high school had set up their own events to entertain kids. The gnome home, fairy forest and pirate groups had prepared short skits to perform. The "cookies" group baked cookies for the kids to decorate with sprinkles and icing. The decorations team was in charge of decorating



PHOTO BY SARAH HASIUK
(left to right) Iya Ortiz-Beck, Zipporah Gaskill, Rose Myers, Hope Magee, and Thea Lamers take a break from setting up their Halloween house rooms to pose for a photo in their costumes.

the house to look Halloween themed. Face painters greeted the kids as they walked into the house. A group of fortune tellers were stationed in a very peaceful room in a corner of the house. A scarecrow maze was strung across a hallway on the second floor. And the favorite of the kids, the happy room, was stationed in the garage and consisted of fish pong, a donut on a string competition, and musical chairs. Once the rooms were set up, everyone working in the Halloween House was given lunch and snacks graciously prepared by a group of students in the kitchen. "We are making food for the high school ... because many people don't bring a lunch and are working hard all day," senior Celeste Kastel-Riggan explained. The students from the NPA middle school arrived at the house around noon. They were directed to the back lawn, where they participated in a pumpkin relay, which was won by 7th grader Noah Hergenrader. They were then joined by the kids from Trinidad elementary to sing Halloween songs in the living room. Afterward, the kids split off into the groups and departed to follow a carefully organized schedule. The kids would enjoy most of the rooms for seven minutes, but they would unfortunately not be able to experience all of the rooms. "We have to be precise with the times in order for everyone to proceed through without everything getting too chaotic," principal Michael Bazemore said when asked about the schedule. All in all, the Halloween house was a great time for everyone involved. "It's sort of like a marathon where people have to depend on each other to present something, and I love the cooperative problem-solving aspect of it" M. Bazemore reflected. "It is a great time where the whole school can be together."



PHOTO BY AUTUMN WRIGHT
In addition to the traditional dancers (above), several NPA students from the IB Theater class performed at the event.

Local students help Pakistani girls get an education

By Aria Cabot
Staff Writer

Domestic abuse and child marriages run rampant in Pakistan. A local organization called the Roshni Centre was started by Rabia O'Loren to help young girls attend school. O'Loren's organization is a non-profit and raises money to send girls to school in poverty-stricken rural Pakistan.

On Sunday, November 12th, the Roshni Centre hosted their annual event at the D Street Community Center. The Roshni Center's event was called "20/20 Vision" because their goal is to help 20,000 girls go to school by the year 2020. O'Loren, the founder of the Roshni Centre, said, "even if we are not able to reach our goal, even if it feels out of reach, it's good to have a goal because it keeps us all motivated."

O'Loren is an inspiration to many local girls. She helps Humboldt's youth appreciate the gift they have of being able to go to school. She also helps local people be a part of making a difference in the world. "I started the Roshni Centre out of nothing in 2006, but I could have done none of it without the help of my community," O'Loren commented.

The 20/20 Vision event was ac-

companied by delicious food that tasted like it was straight out of Pakistan. The food was made by O'Loren, NPA junior Nelli Major, three Roshni Center board members, and local volunteers. The guests were entertained by lots of local talent, including belly dancers, musicians, poets, and performers. A few NPA students also performed dances and an informative skit about women's rights was performed by NPA's IB Theater students. At the end of the night, O'Loren shared a presentation about her



PHOTO BY AUTUMN WRIGHT
The Roshni center event featured traditional Pakistani dancing, clothing, music, and food.

20/20 vision, including artwork done by the NPA's 9th grade class. If you missed the event, O'Loren's presentation is on the the Roshni Centre Facebook page. This page is full of information about upcoming events, classes, and donation opportunities. O'Loren offers cooking classes, does bake sales, and sells items from Pakistan to raise money for these underprivileged girls. O'Loren's dedication to bettering the lives of girls in Pakistan has caused her to be a role model to countless people. She is an example of how much difference one person can make in the world.



PHOTO BY SARAH HASIUK
NPA teacher Amy Miller takes on the role of a storytelling fairy and entertains students from the NPA middle school with a chilling tale.



Tawhid Atul brings the spirit of Bangladesh to NPA

By Ruth Magee
Staff Writer

Bogra, Bangladesh is a bustling city of 780,000 people. Tawhid Atul is an exchange student at NPA from this ancient city. Bogra's main industry is red chili export. It is most famous for its many ancient Buddhist stupas, Hindu temples, and ancient palaces of Buddhist kings and Muslim sultans since it is the oldest city in Bangladesh.

Atul is 17 years old and is an only child. He has lived in Bogra his whole life and was extremely excited to come to Arcata when he found out he was able to come to America. One of the main differences between Arcata and Bogra that Atul has found most significant, is the weather. "The weather is very different. It's like 77 degrees in Bangladesh right now which is really cold!" said Atul, as he was bundled up in many coats on a cold and foggy Arcata morning.

Atul doesn't have any pets in Bogra, but he is staying with Kelly Urbin at her home in Eureka, and she has many animals. In his free time Atul loves, "singing, reading books, social media, and going out with my family." His favorite genre of books is science fiction. Math is Atul's favorite subject, but he also loves his game development courses. After high school, Atul is hoping to come back to the United States to pursue a higher education.

So far, Atul has greatly enjoyed his time in Arcata and is excited to spend the rest of the year here. Atul loves NPA's community and remarked, "the people here are so sweet!" He has been studying English since primary school, and is looking forward to bettering his English over his upcoming year as an 11th grader in America.



PHOTO BY SARAH HASIUK
Tawhid Atul is from Bogra, Bangladesh and is excited to spend his junior year studying at NPA.

Bow Piyasiriluksika strengthens NPA's bond with Thailand

By Autumn Wright
Staff Writer

There are many exciting and difficult differences between the United States and Thailand. Some of these differences have proven to be challenging, but at times a triumph for NPA exchange student Bow Piyasiriluksika.

Piyasiriluksika came to NPA from her school in Bangkok called the Demonstration School of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. Piyasiriluksika came to the United States to further her education at an American high school and expressed that it has always been her "dream to come to the United States." Piyasiriluksika has been eager to come to America since she was little. "Every student in Thailand wants to come here," she explained.

Her school in Thailand is vastly different from NPA. "My school in Thailand is bigger and they are very strict, someone can't be late to school," she said. "We have to pray in the morning, but here it's different." In her opinion, America has a better education system than Thailand, and she has loved learning here. Piyasiriluksika enjoys the many subjects that NPA offers, with her favorite being math. Piyasiriluksika has taken the opportunity to participate in NPA school sports such as tennis and cross country as well. She enjoys spending her free time with her new friends, some of which are fellow exchange students.

Piyasiriluksika has stayed with three host families while studying at NPA this year, and although staying in multiple families is unusual, she said she "loves [her] host families so much ... they are all so nice." Piyasiriluksika has also formed strong friendships with her classmates and peers, and she is delighted to have this opportunity to meet so many new people.

Because Piyasiriluksika is living in another country, it is difficult to adjust to the culture. Arcata may be different from Bangkok, but Piyasiriluksika says she loves how colorful and lively everything is. "It's very different from my country because there are small houses. They are so cute," she giggled. Everything in Bangkok is big compared to the houses and buildings of Arcata. She also found that, "The landscape here is natural. Everything in Bangkok is cities and concrete buildings, and they don't have many pretty landscapes and trees."

Piyasiriluksika has been able to explore Humboldt County with her host families, go to the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and take many photos along the way. She is excited to spend this year learning all about America with her new found friends.



PHOTO BY SARAH HASIUK
Bow Piyasiriluksika, from Bangkok, Thailand says it has always been her dream to visit the United States.

Luxti Arrarte represents Basque Country

By Omar Gadzhiev
Staff Writer

It takes a lot of courage to leave one's country, and even more courage to return after a year. Every exchange student is an adventurer, a warrior burning to explore the world. Luxti Arrarte is one of NPA's seven exchange students for the 2017 to 2018 school year. She is a unique individual with her own story and goals that she is excited to share with NPA's student body.

She comes from a land far away, a little country called France. Her home is in Basque Country, a small autonomous countryside located on the border of France and Spain. Excited to interact with American culture, and to increase her proficiency in Spanish and English, she undertook a journey to the opposite side of the globe. She fell in love with Arcata and the ambiance of its life and culture. She strives to meet new people, make new friends, learn sign language, and understand the American essence. Her goals are numerous, however the time she has to accomplish them is limited. She said, "I was shocked when I saw the school for the first time, but now it is my favorite thing." The first encounter with NPA often leads to confusion bordering on shock, but now Arrarte loves the small size and intimacy of NPA, and even confessed her love for the choir. The length of lunch concerns

her, but there is nothing that can distract Arrarte from achieving her goal of this year: having the ultimate American experience. Moreover, she has developed her passion for visual arts and was inspired by the San Francisco art trip to indulge deeper into her study of the arts. Being an ardent dancer, she is practicing dance in Arcata at the No Limits Dance Academy, and enjoys working with her American dance colleagues and experiencing the different teaching styles.

It is painfully hard to assimilate into the American society, to understand the way of life, to make friends, and be able to live among people of a different culture. Arrarte was capable of achieving all of that in just her first few months. She enriches our community, and the community empowers her. That is why exchange students are called exchange students. Like a nuclear bomb (in a good sense) international students arrive at a new place, and change the face of it entirely while simultaneously are changed by the journey and the destination. Students, perhaps, are the only things countries should launch into other nations because they possess the power to transform the world into a brave new one.



PHOTO BY SARAH HASIUK
Luxti Arrarte is representing Basque Country, a small region on the French/Spanish border, at NPA.

From Berlin to Arcata

By Abram Rau
Staff Writer

People love to travel. They enjoy venturing to a foreign place and experiencing what it has to offer, be it for a day, month, or year. Few students choose to study abroad and spend a year, or sometimes two in an entirely different environment. High school is a time when kids explore the options in the world around them and make decisions that will determine the rest of their lives. Johanna Hoffman is one of the brave individuals who have chosen to study abroad this school year.

Coming from Berlin, Germany, Hoffman is the daughter of an eye doctor and a government worker. She comes from a school with 800 students that emphasizes the study on old languages and arts. She plays in her school orchestra and in her free time enjoys beach soccer, as well as rock climbing, and horseback riding. Since Europe is seeing the worst refugee crisis since World War II, once a week she volunteers her time to help refugees become accustomed to the German culture and way of life.

Hoffman did not choose to go to NPA.



PHOTO BY SARAH HASIUK
Johanna Hoffman, from Berlin, Germany, has traveled across the globe to study at NPA this year.

She decided to attend school in the United States, and then was randomly assigned to NPA. However, she is "really happy to be here now," and is enjoying her time at NPA. She commends NPA's more "European style" education that stands out from other more typical American high schools. She loves how small NPA's student population is, and enjoys experiencing how this creates a vastly different environment than her huge school in Germany. This is both her first year at NPA and her first time traveling abroad. However she has enjoyed NPA so much that she is thinking of returning for her senior year next year. After she finishes high school, Hoffman is interested in studying law at a prestigious college in Berlin. NPA has already made a huge impact on her life, and she can't wait to see how much she will have learned and changed by the end of the school year.

Emily Drescher takes in the culture of Humboldt County

By Amaya Bechler
Staff Writer

"I wanted to experience something new," German student Emily Drescher said when speaking about why she chose to come to the United States. "Another culture, another continent. Everything is new and it's a great chance to get more self-confidence," she remarked. Being in the US, Humboldt, and NPA, has exposed her to many new things. Those that stand out to her are meeting new people, seeing new places, and tasting new food. "You just get to experience so many new things," she explained. "So that's really cool."

As for coming to a new school, it has been a challenge for her to get used to being in a school that is taught entirely in English. Another difference is in the size of the student body. Her school in Germany has over a thousand students and therefore, offers many more subjects. However, she remarks that she doesn't think NPA is very different in terms of learning. "I had similar subjects, so it's not that different from Germany actually." As for extra-curricular activities, two of Drescher's long time interests have been acting and tennis, both of which NPA offers.

One of her goals while in the United



PHOTO BY RUTH MAGEE
Emily Drescher, from Berlin, Germany is especially glad to be in California for her exchange year as she loves the ocean.

States is to travel as much as possible in order to make the most out of her experience. Drescher's mother has also travelled to California in the past, and this was one of her motivations for deciding to visit this particular state.

One of Drescher's favorite things about California is the ocean, and enjoys always being so close to it. When it comes to weather, she remarks that Humboldt is neither hot nor cold, while the seasons are more dramatic in Germany. As for the people she's met so far, they've made her draw the conclusion that "people [in Humboldt] are really nice."

Additionally, one of Drescher's favorite things about being here is the food. She was surprised that "a lot of people, especially here, eat healthy." Before coming to the United States, her stereotype was that "a lot of Americans would always eat pizza," so she considers it a positive surprise.

Drescher is sad that she only gets to stay in Arcata for a year, but so far, she has learned so much and made so many new friends. Because of this, she is excited to spend the next year broadening her horizons in a new place.



Smaller town, bigger family - from India to Arcata

By Caleb Weiss
Staff Writer

An international exchange is a very special experience for both the student and the family they stay with. Muskaan Sagar, from Gujarat, India has come to the United States to study and graduate from NPA. She is planning on staying in the United States for the rest of her high school career and wants to also attend college here. She is staying with the Gaskill family, who have two students at NPA - Omega Gaskill, who is a sophomore and Zipporah Gaskill who is a freshman.

Sagar enjoys going to school at NPA and said, “It’s not weird, like I expected.” She expressed that NPA has a rich variety of classes, and that she enjoys studying here. Living in another country that speaks a different language is difficult, but Sagar feels like she is fitting in. One of the main challenges she faces is homesickness. She is very close to her mom and dad and FaceTimes them daily.

Arcata offers a lot of new opportunities for Sagar, and something she really enjoys about living here is spending time with her five host siblings. Back in India, she only has one younger sister. For her, the change in family size is unfamiliar, but she still enjoys it. Since she arrived in the United States, Sagar has also had the opportunity to

explore the Bay Area, which is very small compared to her home city. Sagar’s home town of Vadodara has a population of around 2.1 million people, so living in Arcata is a different environment than she is accustomed to.

According to Sagar, the Indian education system vastly differs from the United States. Schools in India are focused on science, arts or commerce in the 11th and 12th grades, so Sagar appreciates the variety of courses available to students at NPA. Sagar’s dream is to work for NASA either as a space scientist or an astronomer.

Sagar is actively trying to make friends in her new environment. “I am making friends, but it’s different in the U.S. because making friends in India was really easy. People in India are more sociable and more talkative. Here, I feel people are more reserved, but I am still trying to make more friends.” In her free time, Sagar enjoys playing tennis. “I play tennis as my extra curricular activity, because back in India, I used to play badminton and table tennis a lot. But after coming here, I explored a new sport, which was really exciting.”

Coming to the United States and studying at NPA has been an enriching experience for Sagar, and she can’t wait to see what the rest of the year has in store.



PHOTO BY SARAH HASIUK.
Muskaan Sagar is from Gujarat, India. She enjoys playing tennis and adventuring throughout Humboldt County.

SEÑOR GYENIS

from page 1

For the 2015 to 2016 school year, Gyenis taught Spanish at Sobrato High School in San Jose, California. However, he just couldn’t stay away from Humboldt County and moved back after one year. Gyenis taught English as a Second Language at the Eureka Adult School during the 2016 to 2017 school year. Even though the classes he taught were advertised as English as Second Language, he doesn’t like to call it that because, “sometimes [English] is the third or fourth language for some people. But it’s kind of just known as ESL [English as a Second Language] and when you advertise ELD [English Language Development], or ELL [English Language Learners] classes, people don’t really know what they are, so we still use the term ESL,” Gyenis explained. This year, Gyenis is excited to be teaching at NPA and can’t wait to help the student population become fluent in Spanish. When Gyenis is not making lesson plans or teaching at school, he enjoys being active in nature. “I like to do outdoor stuff like surfing, mountain biking, hiking, camping, and of course, soccer. I try to do that stuff every day after school in between grading and prepping for classes for an hour or two,” he said. Gyenis expressed that being active helps him refocus, and he feels like it is a good way to stay healthy both mentally and physically.

Aside from spending time outdoors, Gyenis loves learning new languages. In 2014 Gyenis and his wife traveled to Brazil for the FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) World Cup and before the couple left for the soccer tournament, they learned Portuguese. “When I arrived [in Brazil] people were like ‘how long have you been here’ and I’d be like ‘I got here today,’ and they would be like ‘whoa,’” Gyenis remembered.

In order to become fluent in Portuguese, Gynesis stuck to a strict regime of studying. “I studied a lot when I was teaching at South Fork. I would go down to the river in the spring time and I’d jump into the water and then I’d have my little Portuguese book and it was full of these Portuguese sentences that I would just be reading out loud. That’s how I learned all the pronunciation, through repetition,” he explained.

Gyenis considers travel to be a profoundly important pastime. Even though he is not a native Spanish speaker, Gyenis has always been interested in learning about other cultures and languages, and he hopes to one day lead an NPA trip to Spain so he can enlighten students to the magic of travel and allow them to become bilingual.

Queer Straight Alliance

Club offers safe space for discussion

By Amaya Bechler
Staff Writer

In our current society, a prevalent and controversial issue is that of LGBTQ+ rights. At NPA, the Queer Straight Alliance meets at lunch to discuss what has been happening in the queer community at a local and national level. Started last year by alumna Rachel Post, the all-inclusive club is led by junior J.T. Albright and involves students from all grade levels. The club focuses on cordial conversation regarding club members’ own experiences with the queer and straight world.

Club meetings start with students getting their lunch and filing into their meeting room. After everyone has assembled, a prompt is given that is open to discussion by anyone present. “One thing we usually do a lot,” Albright explained, “is bring up something that is going on, and then we just discuss it. For example, last week we talked about an issue with discrimination in our local community and businesses.” During their meeting on October 17th, a few members shared their stories about coming out, and also discussed their emotions associated with it. This discussion is both serious and informal, and the atmosphere is comfortable as members discuss their own experiences and give advice to their peers.

Beyond what takes place during their lunchtime meetings, the club hopes to benefit the queer community by holding fundraisers. One possible option they have considered is holding bake sales for a local charity. “I was thinking of doing fundraisers but we haven’t really gotten it into action quite yet,” Albright said. Though they are still working on planning such an event, they hope that they will soon make it a reality, and further expand the role of the club in our local community.

Opera a la Carte



PHOTO BY SOFIA PELIFIGUE
Seniors Amelia Parker and Mattea Denney (left) performed alongside the members of the San Francisco Opera Company. Parker and Denney joined the cast as Cinderella’s wicked step-sisters.



PHOTO BY SOPHIA PELAFIGUE
The cast of this year’s Opera a la Carte with the San Francisco Opera Company bow after their performance of Gioachino Rossini’s La Cenerentola, an adaptation of Cinderella. Students involved in the production were (from left to right) Zaca Leatherwood, Amelia Parker, Mattea Denney, Natasha Anderson, Aaron Oliphant, Omar Gadzhiev, Conrad McConnell, Aria Cabot, and Sophia Escudero.

Hess leads as cross country coach

By Abram Rau
Staff Writer

There’s nothing quite like the anticipation before a big cross country meet. All the hours of hard work, training, and preparation will finally be put to the test.

First year cross country coach Adam Hess has demonstrated his dedication to the cross country program ever since he assumed the role of coach. Hess had taught math and physics at NPA for two years before becoming the coach of the team. “This was my first year as the cross country coach, and I enjoyed coaching the students on the team,” Hess reflected.

The team’s practice regimen incorporates various types of exercise. “The practices ran five days a week in the community forest because it was really hilly and challenging there,” Hess explained, “and other days we did strength training.” Such a rigorous exercise regimen was not easy, and team members were often rewarded for their hard work following a practice. “Snacks were always a big hit after practice,” Hess joked.

Hess believes that the benefits of being on the track

team go beyond winning races. “Really, it’s just about interacting with everyone and acknowledging them for who they were.” Hess strove to ensure that the cross country team was a safe, relaxing space, saying that “a run in the forest could help them feel less stressed.”

This season was a monumental one for Hess and the team. This year, the cross country team hosted a run as well as running in other meets across Humboldt County. The team capped its season off with a trip to Hayward to participate in a large meet there. Although small, this NPA team has reflected the sense of community present at NPA. “One thing that I really enjoyed was getting to run with my athletes,” Hess remarked.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JUNE JAMES
(Back row) Jason Roberts, Coach Adam Hess, (front row) Tehilla Horowitz, Bella Ely, Amaya Bechler, Shoni Rheinschmidt, Zaca Leatherwood. The team had a successful meet at Hayward in November.



The beauty of visual art is explored in San Francisco

By Omar Gadzhiev
Staff Writer

Humans are driven by many things, but one of the primary drives is the longing for beauty. Marceau Verdiere undertakes the San Francisco art trip every year to provide students with a chance to explore well-known artists such as Klimt and Matisse, but also discover new rising stars.

Verdiere has been leading the art trip for many years now, and is not planning to halt this tradition. Each year, students depart from school early in the morning to drive to San Francisco. They soon realize that beyond being an IB requirement, this trip is a life-changing experience. The memories from the trip will linger in their hearts, and they will continually be inspired by the art they have seen.

Verdiere reflected that this trip, beyond being just a trip for students, is also a trip for himself. “I find something new in every single trip, every trip has been a powerful life experience and inspiration for my work and self-reflection,” Verdiere explained. That may sound surprising, considering that Verdiere is very knowledgeable about the discipline, but this shows that the world of art will never cease to surprise. If the visual arts trip has this immense impact on the teacher, it must have an even greater impact on the students.

Nelli Major, a junior at NPA, was happy to share her experiences and thoughts about this year’s trip. She was not just a student participant; she further contributed by organizing an entire art tour for the group. She navigated them through Mission Street, and introduced them to the street art that so often remains overlooked by society. “My goal was to show art that is often hidden from eyes and disregarded by society, while it is no less beautiful it is certainly more hidden, mysterious, honest, and highly personal,” Major added.

Furthermore, art students were lucky enough to contemplate the newly discovered painting of Leonardo Da Vinci, Salvator Mundi. Students also saw work from other renowned artists, such as Klimt and Rodin, and described seeing their art as an almost religious experience.

Verdiere identified his favorite part of the trip as the class discussions. After a day in the city, the students sat in a customary NPA circle and started discussing ideas and creating new ones. “I love when, in the evening, students talk about their experience, thoughts, and just what their interaction with art resulted in,” Verdiere expressed. This year, the discussions were rich, ignited by visits to legendary museums like the De Young and the Legion of Honor. The conversations did not just provide the chance for students to share their own opinions, but also to integrate with others, evolve intellectually, and more fully comprehend art pieces by seeing it through the lenses of others. “Passionate thoughts, loud statements, and broadening of horizons,” are the things Verdiere is seeking, and those are the things that students have experienced.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MIKAYLA COLLINS
(left to right) Mikayla Collins, Gaby Saavedra, Melina Wardynski, Kayitesi Mussmann, Johanna Hoffman, Luxti Arrarte, Nelli Major, Lana Sharkey, Fiona Shaughnessy, and visual arts teacher Marceau Verdiere toured the famous murals and street art of San Francisco’s Mission district.

Inspiration resulting from the trip is often transformed into amazing works of art that the students create. Verdiere will not stop aiding them, and will always be near to guide his students. They will enter the world with courage, prepared to look for beauty everywhere: in the museums, in nature, on the streets, and in other people.

When Verdiere was asked if there is anything that will stop him from making the art trip happen, he said, “only if students stop benefiting from it, only if students will not want it to happen.”

The students come back from the trip as new people, with a new look and a spark in their eyes. They cannot explain in words what happened to them, but the spark will remain growing until it can be expressed in outstanding pieces of art.

NPA France trip

Students traveled to France on a language immersion trip in November. See the full story in the Spring edition of the Heron Herald.



PHOTO BY SARA HAMMOUTENE
France trip travelers pose in front of the Louvre. Listed from left to right: Aaron Oliphant, Isaiah Lockard, Melissa Horne, Jane McCaffrey, Gail McComas, and Maya Hergenrader in front.



PHOTO BY SARA HAMMOUTENE
Gail McComas (left) and Jane McCaffrey (right) take in the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial.

Not caring about politics is a luxury

By Amelia Parker
Staff Writer

Over the summer of 2017, I attended a week-long advocacy program hosted by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). Held at Georgetown University, the program consisted of high school juniors and seniors attending seminars and lectures each day. We were also separated into elective groups ranging from topics of mass incarceration to women’s voting rights. I was assigned to the “Immigration” and the “Muslim Ban” group, in which we had lawyers working for the ACLU, who were currently invested in cases against the newly passed immigration laws, educating us on the methods of how we could take activism back to our communities. The program, as a whole focused on ways we could learn from our communities, while also making our voices heard. The atmosphere of the institute was incredibly motivating. Every student in attendance demonstrated their willingness and determination to participate in the activities. The program’s environment was very different from that of school or other academic events because my peers were all involved and invested in the same topics as I was. The most important takeaway of the program was “not caring about politics is a luxury,” which has now solidified my dream to become an activist or politician.

The ACLU is a non-profit organization that will sue branches of the United States government if they attempt to pass legislation or declare a verdict that is unconstitutional. By declaring themselves non-partisan, much of their loss in membership can be attributed to public misunderstanding of controversial topics. Many of the cases the ACLU lawyers are currently working on deal with immigration laws and freedom of speech.

While the ACLU’s fundamental principle is freedom of speech, it is imperative to recognize that they are not a strictly liberal organization. NPA’s community, commonly takes a more liberal approach to politics, but the ACLU argues that this is not the only view which should be protected. The ACLU has taken cases for Nazi and Ku Klux Klan supporters. They take these cases not because they necessarily support the individuals, but because they understand that freedom of speech is not limited to the “right” or the “majority” side. It is possible in future events, that groups could hold these biases against the ACLU.

In the instance with Charlottesville, where a Neo-Nazi demonstration took place and three people were killed when the protest got out of hand, the ACLU lost many supporters because of their decision to support the protesters legally. The ACLU focuses their efforts on the First Amendment specifically because the law is purposefully unbiased, and it is crucial that it is enforced this way.

Programs such as the ACLU Summer Advocacy Institute are vital and beneficial for the next generation to understand that politics should not just be an extracurricular course that is chosen in high school or a distinct major; it is predominantly the fight for human and fundamental rights.



PHOTO COURTESY OF LEILA MOSS
Amelia Parker, a senior at NPA, attended a summer program hosted by the ACLU at Georgetown University in Maryland.



Mass shootings affect everyone

By **Mattea Denney**
Staff Writer

Waking up on October 2nd, 2017, I habitually checked my phone. Immediately, I saw posts slathered across social media, proclaiming “heart-broken prayers” for Las Vegas. My heart sunk. What happened in Las Vegas, a city I once called home? When I learned that it was the deadliest mass shooting in American history, I was shocked, terrified, and repulsed. Nevertheless, I went on with my day. I got ready for school, and didn’t think to research the event until later. A simple Google search alerted me to the information that the shooter lived in Mesquite, Nevada, where my grandparents currently live. I texted my mom, telling her the strange coincidence. She replied informing me that the shooter, now the most dangerous mass murderer in American history, lived in the same neighborhood as my grandparents -- just a few streets over. The degree of separation that had once distanced me from these kind of events dissipated. Residents of Las Vegas, my previous home, had been gunned down by a man who lived near my grandparents. I suddenly felt more affected than I had by any previous shooting. This made me wonder: Why have I become numb to these events?

Enough shootings have occurred in my short 17 years for me to come to terms with an unfortunate pattern. Someone will take the lives of innocent people, automatically be labeled either a “terrorist” or “mentally unstable,” and leave the country in a state of shock. Some people will fight to make changes to gun laws, but then nothing happens. We seem to push away the memory of the last tragedy to make way for the next one.

CNN reported that since 1966, nearly a third of the world’s mass shootings have occurred in the United States. I have lived through nearly 100 mass shootings. The first shooting I can clearly remember was the Trolley Square shooting in Salt Lake City, Utah. My family, who is originally from Utah, was living in Las Vegas at the time. I remember watching my mom frantically call friends and family members as our television blared the horrifying footage. Just two months later, a college student shot and killed 32 students and professors at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia. As a seven-year-old, I was already learning that mass shootings were a “normal” occurrence.

Later, a song came out in when I was ten years old: “Pumped Up Kicks” by Foster the People. I loved this song, and as I studied its origins, I learned about Columbine, the event that occurred ten months before I was born, and inspired the song. I remember thinking



In considering the effects of mass shootings, Denney asks herself: “Why have I become numb to these events?”

to myself, “We’re lucky that schools have such good security nowadays, because this kind of thing won’t ever happen again.” And yet, two years later, the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting happened. My mom did not want to tell me, out of fear that I would be frightened about something similar possibly happening at my school, so I found out from watching the news on my own. My mom’s reluctance to tell me about the horrible event was understandable, but at twelve years old, I thought it was silly. I realized how these nightmarish shootings were becoming a part of my life, of everyone’s lives.

How is it, that in the short time I have been exposed to these horrific events, I continuously resign to the tragic reality and find myself desensitized each time it happens? Why is it that I decide to write a column expressing my concern about mass shootings only after my grandparents’ neighbor becomes the killer? How is it that our generation has become so desensitized that we forget about these tragedies within a few weeks of them happening? More importantly, we allowed our country to be one that operates on fear alone.

The presence of social media and the ability to instantly share opinions on the internet has made these mass shootings ignite the flame of debate, and nothing but debate. We are all eager to share our thoughts, but not so eager to do something about it. Personally, I think this is ridiculous. The day is not so far away when we, the youth, will become the elected leaders of this country. With that in mind, it is not only our right, but our duty to voice our concerns. I realize that writing about an issue without offering a solution is frowned upon, but it is not my place to offer a solution. That is not the purpose of this column. I have my opinions on the matter, just like everyone else, and they all need to be expressed. That is the only way things can change, the only way we can stop this from ever happening again. I encourage each and every young person to educate themselves and decide for themselves what they believe, and express it. Contact your elected officials; make the change you want to see happen. My generation, the young people of this world, now hold the power to make a change, so let’s make sure we do.

Growing veggies, herbs, and friendships

NPA’s gardening club has started

By **Amaya Bechler**
Staff Writer

Wander behind the United Methodist Church one Tuesday afternoon and you might happen upon NPA’s new gardening elective with its members tilling soil, harvesting cabbage, or pruning a sage bush. This new and unique elective was the idea of sophomore Siena Costanzo and senior Maximus Landon. “We were both talking about how having a gardening club would be fun,” Costanzo explained, “And then Max said, ‘What if we had an elective?’” After talking to teachers, the two students managed to make their idea a reality with help from school chef and gardener Rocky Whitlow.

The gardening elective, which started this fall, has six members who are all sophomores with the exception of senior, Landon. The other students in the class are Erin Le, Julian Ramirez, Ben George, and Louis Margolin.

“Our goal is for long-term impact,” Costanzo remarked, while tending to some herbs. She continued saying that their group’s goal is for, “this garden to last a long time in the community.” This encompasses their objective of beautifying the campus while simultaneously producing food for school lunches.

One large hurdle the gardening club is dealing with is funding. Currently, they have few sponsors, yet to have a successful garden, they are in need of more beds. According to Costanzo, a bed with good soil costs around 150 dollars. Ideally, they would have five or more beds to support a smoothly functioning garden, and have been steadily working toward that goal. When the elective first began, they only had two small beds that were property of the church. Now, they’ve received three more donations: two from an anonymous donor, and one from the school lunch lady, Rocky Whitlow. The two that were given anonymously will go to growing decorative flowers in front of the campus.

The issue with beds has not prevented the club from expanding in other directions. One of their current priorities is turning over soil behind the southernmost wall. The soil there has become clay-like and devoid of nutrients,

so the members of the elective are working to make it more suitable for gardening. The colder weather and diminished growth in winter has not stopped the club from finding a way to keep up their productivity. Their plan is to construct a greenhouse to keep a year-round supply of fresh vegetables.

Another aspect the club is integrating into their work is compost. They have already built one large composting receptacle and have hopes of it continuing into the future. They have teamed up with Whitlow, and together they have created the idea of starting a school-wide composting program which will benefit both the environment and the gardening elective. They plan to expand the composting program further by utilizing worms in a second compost receptacle. The composted organic material will go toward creating fertile soil to grow both ornamental and edible crops.

During every elective period, the members of this ambitious group work on their garden to benefit school lunches, improve NPA’s campus, and to create a space that is pleasant for anyone to visit and relax in. Though they have only just begun what may be a long-running program, they are confident that this elective will be expanded in the future and have a huge impact on NPA’s community.



PHOTO BY MATTEA DENNEY
(Left to right) Maximus Landon, Garden club advisor Mike “Spike” Egan, Siena Costanzo, Louis Margolin, Ben George, Erin Le, Julian Ramirez, work together to fill the new garden bed with soil.



PHOTO BY MATTEA DENNEY
(Left to right) Louis Margolin and Ben George shovel fresh soil into a new garden bed.

Pastels on the Plaza



PHOTO BY CHRISTEL SHAUGHNESSY
Seniors Fiona Shaughnessy and Melina Wardynski drew NPA’s mascot, the blue heron, for Arcata’s “Pastels on the Plaza” event.



PHOTO BY CHRISTEL SHAUGHNESSY
Melina Wardynski (left) and Fiona Shaughnessy (right) proudly pose with their finished artwork. Shaughnessy and Wardynski felt honored to be the two seniors chosen to do this years NPA pastel. As aspiring artists, it was a great experience to work alongside and to learn from so many other amazing artists in our community.